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## MONDALE : Reducing Risk of War Is the No. 1 Priority

Q You want to slow this country's buildup in military spending. Might this send a signal that the U.S. is backing off and thus encourage Soviet aggression?

A Absolutely not. First of all, the latest available CIA figures estimate the real rate of increase in Soviet military spending at about 2 percent. So under my plan, we would be spending more in real increases than the Soviets have been spending in recent years. Secondly, establishing a sensible pacing of real-strength increases would create a credible long-term approach that really serves notice on the Soviets that they've got to deal with us.

It is this runaway defense-spending waste that is affecting the deficit—you know, the \$7,000 coffeepots and \$500 hammers that we read about—plus the unwillingness of the administration to make choices between weapons.

There's an old maxim in the military: If you want to be strong everywhere, you'll be strong nowhere. You've got to make choices. I've got a lot of friends in the military who tell me those choices aren't being made.

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*EXCERPTED*